

CPYRGHT

Page 1
Page 2
Page 3

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
SUN-TIMES

A - 533,870
S - 661,622

FEB 22 1967

Religion

CPYRGHT

The National Council of Churches reported Tuesday that its programs have received "minor" financial assistance from foundations under study as having links with the Central Intelligence Agency.

Dr. R. M. Edwin Espy, general secretary, made the disclosure at the midwinter meeting of the NCC's general board in the Pick-Congress Hotel.

He emphasized that "the Na-

tional Council had no knowledge at any time that any of these gifts may have had any links with CIA involvement."

Meanwhile, it was disclosed here that the CIA played a financial role in an unsuccessful attempt to support a financially troubled Chicago-based bookstore project sponsored by the National Student Assn.

Dr. Espy said, "Both this year and last year the . . . NCC . . . received approximately \$2,000 from the Kaplan Foundation to assist in its poverty-rights program."

For several years prior to 1965, he said, the David and Winfield Baird Foundation contributed \$3,000 and \$4,000 annually to the council for "direct relief" programs in the United States and overseas. Those grants have been terminated, he added.

He also said that a thorough check into foundation relationships showed that the Foundation for Youth and Student Affairs contributed between \$200 and \$300 in 1965 toward expenses of a conference of the NCC-related National Student Christian Federation.

The Rev. LeRoy Brininger,

NCC associate general secretary for administration, told the board at the conclusion of its session that he is making inquiries to determine if the foundation-donated money did in fact originate with the CIA.

He said it is not known "to what extent, if any" the foundation gifts came from the CIA. He has written to the foundations to ask whether their contributions originated with the CIA.

In other action, the board renewed its opposition to the constitutional prayer amendment sponsored by Sen. Everett M. Dirksen (R-Ill.).

Spokesmen for the NCC

co-operative federation of 34 Protestant, Eastern Orthodox and Polish National Catholic Church bodies, testified against the amendment two years ago. Dirksen had taken the idea over from a former New York congressman, Frank J. Becker. The NCC opposed the idea of the amendment when it was known as the "Becker Prayer Amendment."

Dirksen's proposal would declare that nothing in the Constitution "shall abridge the right of persons lawfully assembled, in any public building which is supported in whole or in part through the

expenditure of public funds, to participate in nondenominational prayer."

The CIA's link with the NSA book store here was told by Greg Novsesyan, a spokesman for the student group.

Novsesyan said a \$140,000 contribution to the NSA from the CIA failed to cover all debts of the floundering project. He said a group of Chicago students, who tried to save the project after the NSA gave up, was stuck with \$100,000 in unpaid bills.

Gerald F. Hyman, a University of Chicago graduate student involved with the pro-

ject after the NSA pulled out, said the CIA money was apparently used to pay off major creditors.

However, smaller creditors—including students—were not paid off, Hyman said. The bookstore project ended in bankruptcy in 1964.